THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SUBODH MOHITE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The company has not been able to pay salaries to the employees regularly due to insufficient cash generation. With the assistance from the Government the company management has paid full salaries to its employees upto September, 2002. Thereafter the management has made part payment to its employees in the form of *ad-hoc* salary advances.

(c) A number of steps are being taken by the company to revive its functioning namely rationalizing manpower, reenerging marketing strategy, reduction of inventories/debtors and earning through disposal of surplus assets. The Government are extending all possible help in the above efforts of the company including financial assistance for manpower rationalization through implementation of voluntary retirement scheme (VRS). More than Rs. 55 crore financial assistance has been granted to the company for payment of salaries and wages, discharge of statutory dues and implementation of VRS during the last 3 years.

Diversion of Gratuity amount of employees of Bharat Wagon and Engineering Ltd.

2789. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state :

(a) whether funds released by Government for payment of the gratuity amount to 142 employees of the Bharat Wagon and Engineering Limited under VRS (November, 2000 to January, 2001) has been diverted for payment of the other dues;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether only those employees who have gone to the court got the payment alongwith interest@18 per cent and the other employees covered for the payment of gratuity have not got their legal dues; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SUBODH MOHITE) : (a) An amount of Rs.41.43 lakh was diverted to pay the outstanding gratuity of 41 superannuated employees as per Court/statutory authority orders. However, the gratuity

dues of all the 142 employees separated through VRS between November 2000 and January 2001 have now been settled.

(b) The diversion was necessitated in view of the orders from the court (23 persons), orders of Assistant Labour Commissioner (ALC) (9 persons) and legal notices (9 persons). It was contemplated that the same would be replenished from funds that may be made available for payment of gratuity of the said superannuated employees.

(c) and (d) Payments of interest on gratuity to the superannuated employees were made at rates varying from 5% to 10% as per court/ ALC orders. The gratuity dues of all the 142 employees separated through VRS between November 2000 and January 2001 have since been settled.

Commissioning of Programmes by Guwahati DD Kendra

2790. SHRI INDRAMONI BORA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) The amount allocated for commissioning of the programmes by the Doordarshan in the year 2002-03 in Guwahati Doordarshan Kendra and PPC (NE); and

(b) The number of episodes allocated to the private producers and how many producers are from the North-Eastern States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Prasar Bharati has informed that an amount of Rs. 8.00 crores and Rs.10.5 crores respectively has been allocated to Doordarshan Kendra, Guwahati And PPC (NE), Guwahati for commissioning of programmes during the year 2002-2003.

(b) Prasar Bharati has informed that 1487 episodes were commissioned in DDK, Guwahati, all the producers of which are from North East only.

1379 episodes, from 410 producers, were commissioned in PPC, Guwahati, out of which 365 producers are from North East.

Use of Production and Broadcasting Facility of DD/AIR

2791. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA :

SHRI R.K. ANAND :

SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :